

FLOOD DAMAGE

Symington declares a state of emergency for five counties. B2.

SONNY IS 60

Bono celebrates birthday, gets cake from Jay Leno. B8.

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In defense of 2-edged monikers

As a person whose words are misinterpreted on occasion by readers looking for hidden meaning where none is intended, I sympathize completely with the owners of Hooters.

In Tempe, an organization called Ethics in Action is trying to get the City Council to deny a liquor license to a Hooters restaurant because they say the establishment's name is nothing more than a crude pseudonym for women's breasts.

Coming to the defense of his employer was Joe Wilson, regional director for the Hooters chain. Wilson said with an actual straight face in the presence of witnesses that the name Hooters refers to owls.

Sadly, the Ethics in Action people did not believe him.

Not only that, but Hooters opponents went on to claim that the restaurant's official waitress attire, which utilizes roughly the same amount of material as an average cocktail napkin, creates an atmosphere in which "women are objectified."

Nothing could be further from the truth, according to Hooters' executives.

They see their establishment, waitress uniforms and all, as paying homage to the lowly owl, nothing more.

Frankly, this is something to which Arizona residents should be sensitive, since there is at least one species of owl in our state on the Endangered Species List, perhaps because they spent too much time flitting around outdoors serving drinks to woodland beasts while wearing hardly a tail feather.

At any rate, Wilson said Hooters is a "family" restaurant. And an extremely successful one. The company has outlets all over the United States, in which the responsible owners and operators take every opportunity to share their obvious concern for wildlife and the environment.

Not many months ago, for example, some of the more socially conscious waitresses from Hooters appeared in a *Playboy* magazine pictorial.

Playboy, as you know, is a publication known for its interest in the natural world — the more completely natural the better — and gives considerable exposure to endangered species, primarily the dwindling number of young featherless females who don't mind being thought of as "chicks."

That's why we have to be careful not to make presumptions based on nothing more than a name.

Although it happens all the time.

For instance, these days some people who hear the name "Newt" immediately visualize a slimy, sinister salamander slithering through the sludge, spreading smut.

Then there are others who, unfortunately, read into it the ugly and negative connotation of "politician."

Already this year we've witnessed firsthand how assigning hidden meaning to a name can be divisive to a community.

In Mesa, community groups who found the longtime moniker of a local landmark insensitive and demeaning pressured the City Council into changing the name of a place called "Spook Hill."

It's now known as "Hooterville."

Or something like that.

The point is, if the owners of a restaurant like owls but don't want to call their restaurant "Owls," who are we to presume they don't mean owls when they call it "Hooters?"

Some people just go looking for controversy, I guess.

If the Hooters company were to branch out, so to speak, within the bird family, you can bet money that some group automatically would assume that a restaurant called "Knockers" was something other than what it obviously was intended to be:

A homage to woodpeckers.

Or that the minds of some people immediately would begin thinking of sleazy pseudonyms if Hooters were to introduce a string of vegetarian eating establishments called "Melons."

On the other hand, I'm equally convinced there are a vast number of good, fair-minded individuals out there who are perfectly willing to accept Hooters' explanation for its name.

I'm so convinced of this, in fact, that I'm thinking of putting together my own restaurant and bar, in which I could serve watered-down drinks and overpriced food to exactly that segment of society.

I plan to call the place "Boobs."

Campaign-finance laws threatened

Senate committee votes to repeal contribution limits

By Jonathan Sidener
The Arizona Republic

Public-interest groups say Arizona's campaign-finance laws are effective.

Gov. Fife Symington calls them "a failed experiment."

And a vote by a Senate committee Thursday along party lines put the campaign-finance laws at risk.

With four Republicans voting in favor of repealing the campaign-contribution law and three Democrats opposed, Senate

Bill 1278 passed out of the Senate Government Reform Committee.

The bill, initiated by Symington, would lift all limits on contributions and replace them with more timely reporting of large contributions.

Critics of the bill repeatedly reminded the lawmakers that the existing campaign-disclosure requirements and contribution limits are the result of a successful 1986 ballot initiative.

"The League (of Women Voters) is

truly appalled at your arrogant attempt to gut the people's initiative," League spokeswoman Skeet Blakesley said at a hearing Thursday. "This will remove all meaningful regulation of contributions."

"You're showing contempt for the voters. And I don't think they'll forgive you."

In remarks earlier this week to reporters, Symington defended his own campaign-disclosure record. An *Arizona Republic* computer analysis of records

from last year's election shows that Symington's filings were incomplete for 41 percent of his contributors. By comparison, Symington's Democratic opponent, Eddie Basha, had incomplete filings for 11 percent of his contributors.

The law requires that campaigns collect employer information and that they make their "best efforts" to track down incomplete filings. Symington's campaign failed to list employers for 3,067 out of 7,415 contributors. Basha's



Fife Symington / Calls campaign laws "a failed experiment."

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Waiting to shine — in the shadows



Dexter Wright does the paperwork while he and his son, Halston, 4, wait for a shot at extra roles in *Waiting To Exhale*, to be filmed in the Valley.

Hundreds try out for movie extras

By Judi Villa
The Arizona Republic

Some came looking for that elusive big break into show biz.

Others just wanted to schmooze with the stars.

Whatever the reason, hundreds turned out Thursday hoping to land the roles of extras in *Waiting To Exhale*, a major motion picture that will begin filming in the Valley at the end of the month.

"There is something exciting about this whole celebrity aura. I don't know why it is,"

said Natalie Wiltz, 35. "I'm still trying to figure out why we make fools of ourselves by going up to people and asking them for their autographs."

Gussied up in a form-fitting dress and high heels, Wiltz showed up at 10:30 a.m. for a casting call that didn't start until noon. She joined about 80 other women who also got in line early.

"Opportunities like this don't come around too often. You just have to give it your best shot. Maybe they'll remember something," said Wiltz, a flight attendant with America West

Airlines and a part-time model. "We thought we'd be able to slip in early, but we'll check out the sights."

Waiting To Exhale, a 20th Century Fox picture, is one of the biggest movies ever to film in Phoenix. Based on Terry McMillan's novel by the same name, the movie traces the friendships and romantic lives of four women — black, educated and upscale — living in Phoenix. It stars Whitney Houston and Angela

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Sheriff Joe's jail diner adds corn dogs to budget menu

By Victoria Harker
The Arizona Republic

Corn dogs for county jail inmates? Can you relish the thought?

Frankly speaking, though, Sheriff Joe Arpaio is not getting soft on his get-tough stance.

Inmates still eat bologna sandwiches in place of hot meals for lunch. Their coffee supply will not be replenished when it runs out in two weeks.

The corn dogs are just another of Sheriff Joe's ploys to squeeze the most from his budget during hard fiscal times.

The dogs came from an organization in New York that heard of his efforts to cut costs. Normally, a case of the greasy dogs



Joe Arpaio / "They (inmates) wave at me with a finger when I walk through the jails, but that's OK. If they liked me, I'd be running a hotel," the Maricopa County sheriff says.

goes for almost \$16. Arpaio got 880 cases for 11 cents each.

"I give them bologna for lunch, and now

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— See JUDGE'S, page B2

Lawyer cleared of killers' misconduct claim

By Brent Whiting
The Arizona Republic

Phoenix lawyer Ann Scott Timmer was cleared Thursday of allegations that she tried to frame a man accused of a 1980 double murder.

Judge B. Michael Dann of Maricopa County Superior Court ruled there is no credible evidence to support the accusations of two death-row inmates against Timmer.

"The credibility question has to be resolved in Miss Timmer's favor," Dann ruled after a two-day hearing. "There is no prosecutorial misconduct. None has been proved."

The decision relieved Timmer, who denied ever engaging in improper behavior with the two inmates.

"I'm obviously happy for the result," she said. "I'm sorry that this had to happen."

Timmer is a special prosecutor in the case of Robert Charles Cruz, 47, who is scheduled to begin his fifth trial Tuesday in the execution-style slaying of a Phoenix print-shop owner and his mother-in-law.

She came under fire last week when Cruz's lawyer, Jose de la Vara, filed a motion accusing Timmer of plotting to fabricate evidence against Cruz.

The motion was based on accusations from Michael Poland, who has been sentenced to die for murdering two armored-van guards during a 1977 hijacking and robbery, and on Kevin Scott Roscoe, who is on death row for the 1982 sex-slaying of a 7-year-old Gilbert girl.

Poland, a former client of Timmer, testified Thursday that during a prison visit Nov. 18, Timmer asked him to manufacture evidence that could be used to win a guilty verdict against Cruz.

Roscoe testified that Timmer later mailed him a letter urging him to persuade

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Cling wrap



Mona Reeder/The Arizona Republic
Laura Dougherty, 7, may not be comfortable, but at least she's off her aching feet as she grasps her mother, Kathleen. The pair toured the state Capitol recently on a field trip from St. Gregory's School.